

Learning to Live • Loving to Learn



# **MOUNT VERNON ELEMENTARY WALKABOUT: Existing Conditions, Findings and Recommendations**

July 2017

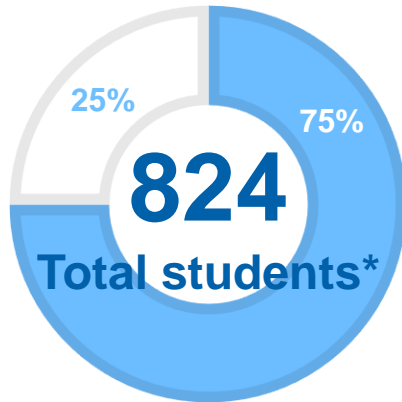
# MOUNT VERNON ELEMENTARY WALKABOUT DETAILS

- **Date:** May 23, 2017
- **Observation:** Arrival
- **Participants:**
  - Toole Design Group staff
  - City of Alexandria Transportation Planning staff
  - Alexandria Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee members
  - Mount Vernon Teachers and Administrators
  - Alexandria Police Officer and Crossing Guard Supervisor
- **Purpose:**
  - Observe school arrival process
  - Evaluate school-zone infrastructure
  - Assess existing Safe Routes to School programming

# OVERVIEW OF MOUNT VERNON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

## STUDENT DISTANCE FROM SCHOOL

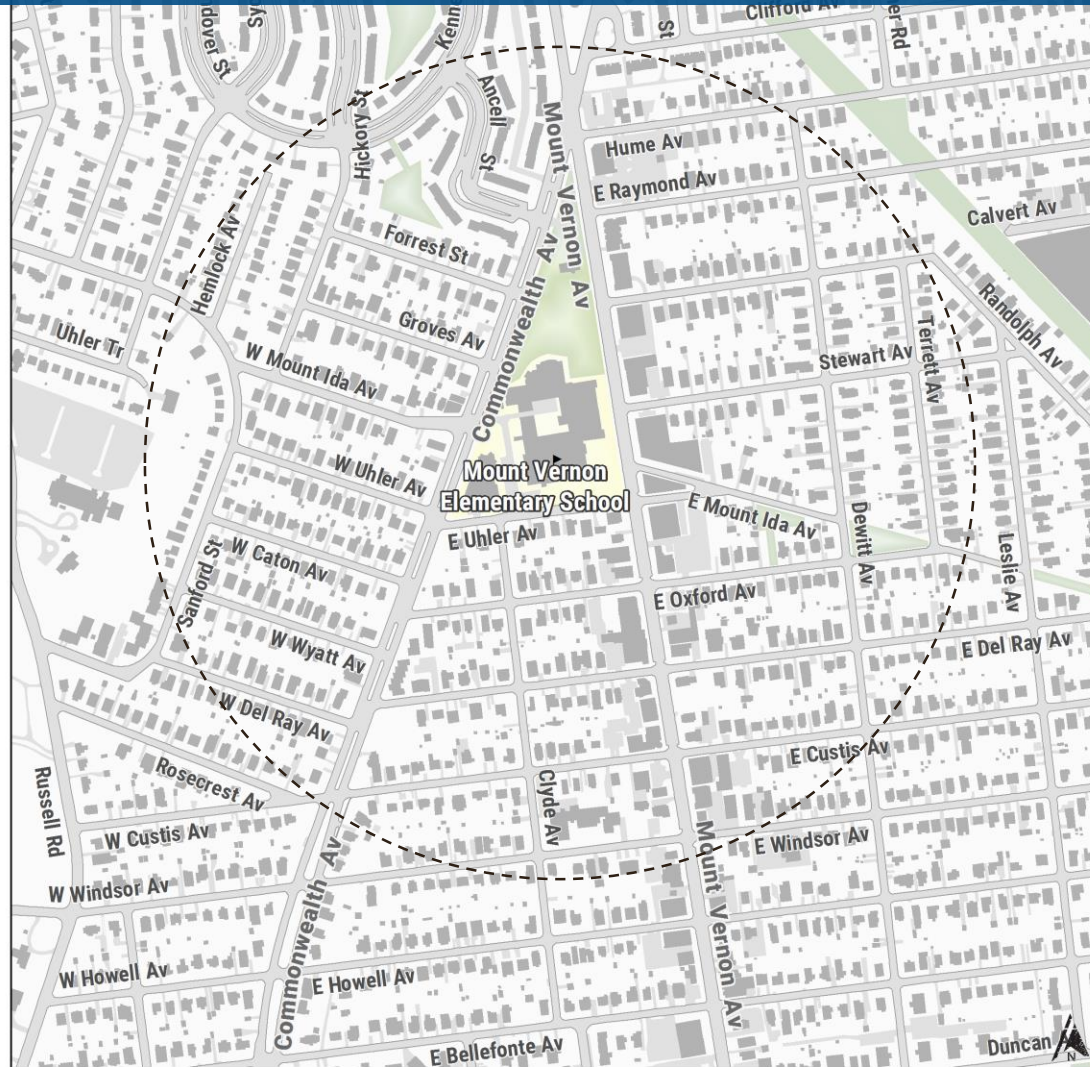
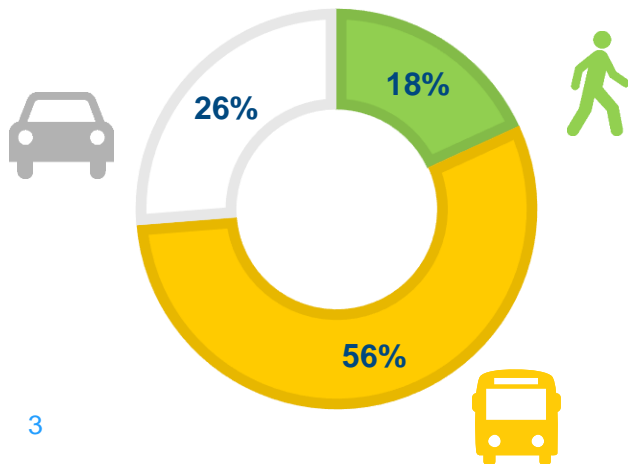
As reported in 2014 Parent Survey (n= 375).



■ 1 mile ■ >1 mile

Average of "to school" and "from school" modes as reported in 2016 Student Travel Tallies.

## STUDENT TRAVEL MODES



	<p><b>Overview Map</b></p> <p>Mt. Vernon Elementary School Alexandria, Virginia</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Schools</li> <li> 1/4 Mile Buffer</li> <li> Parks</li> <li> Roads</li> </ul>
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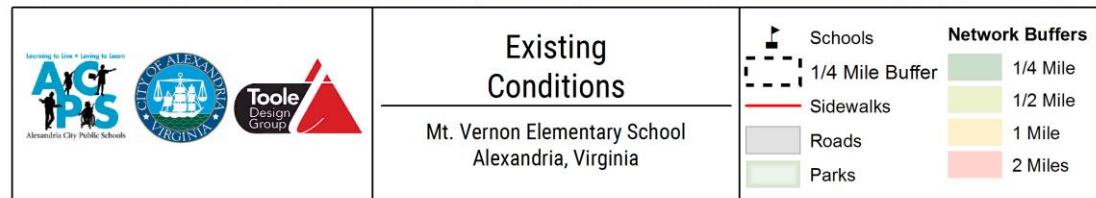
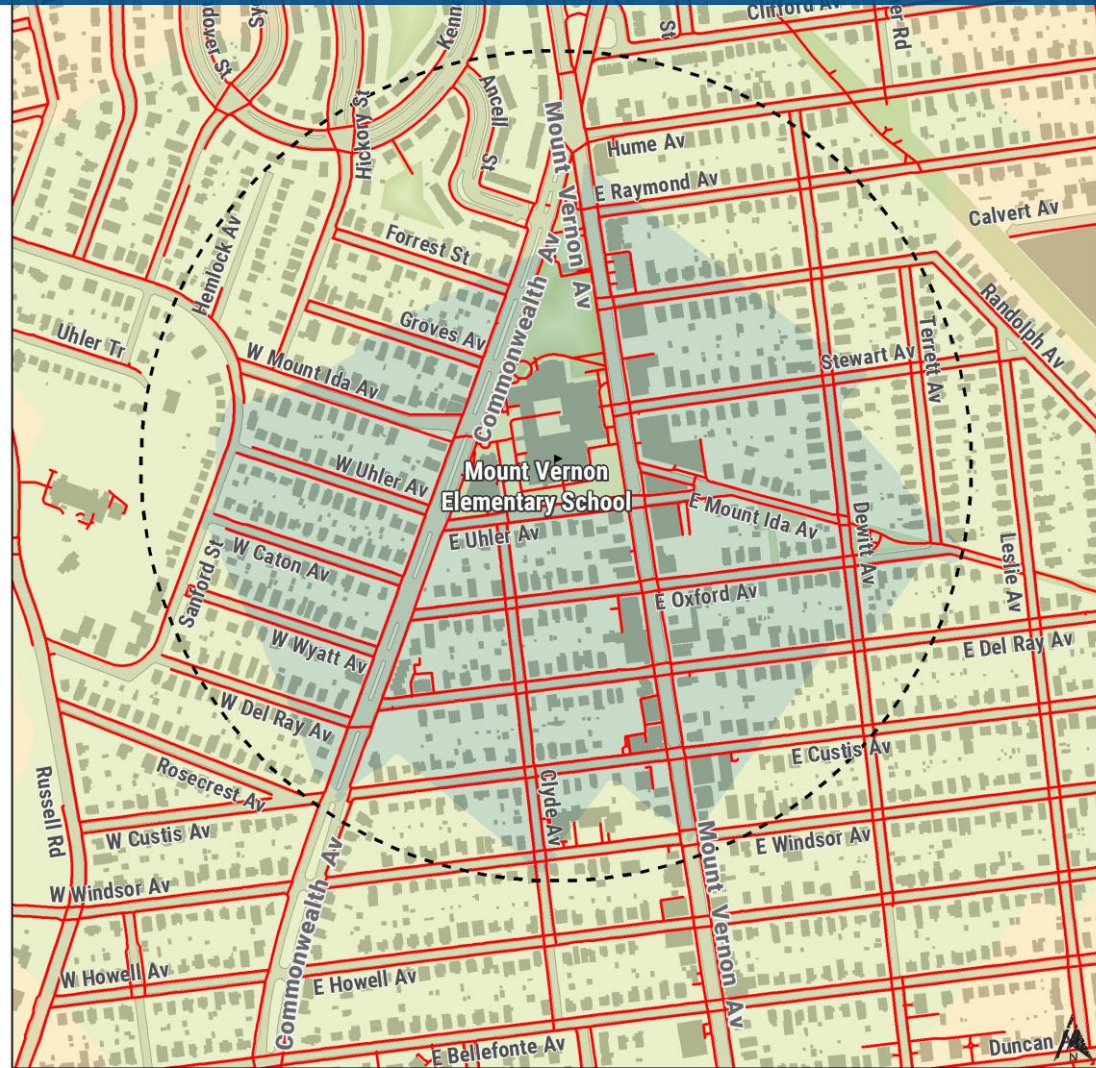


# STUDENT DISTANCE FROM SCHOOL DETAIL

Distance	Percentage of Students
¼ mile	31%
½ mile	16%
1 mile	28%
2 miles	12%
>2 miles	13%

As reported in 2014 Parent Survey (n= 375)

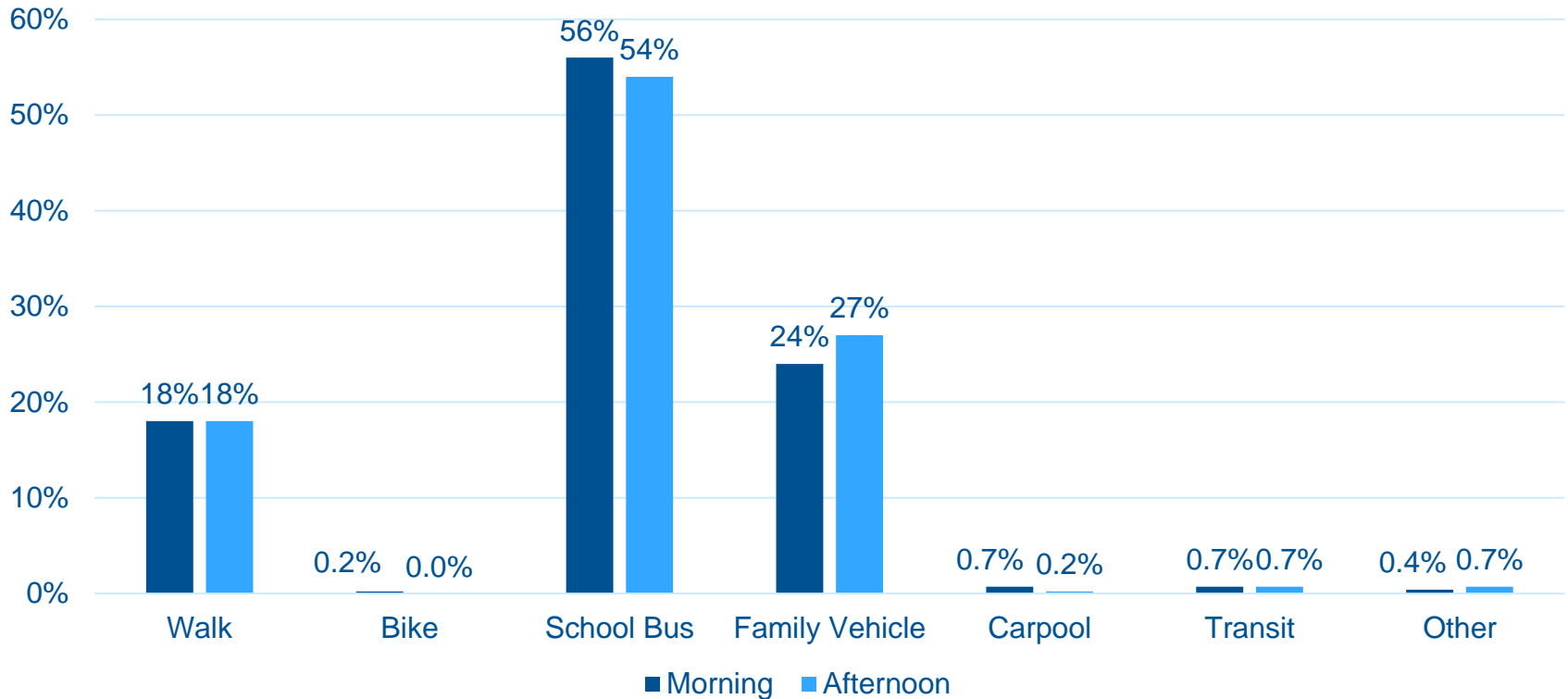
The hollow circle on the map represents a direct distance buffer from the school. The colored polygons show the distance along the road network.



# EXISTING CONDITIONS

# TRAVEL PATTERNS

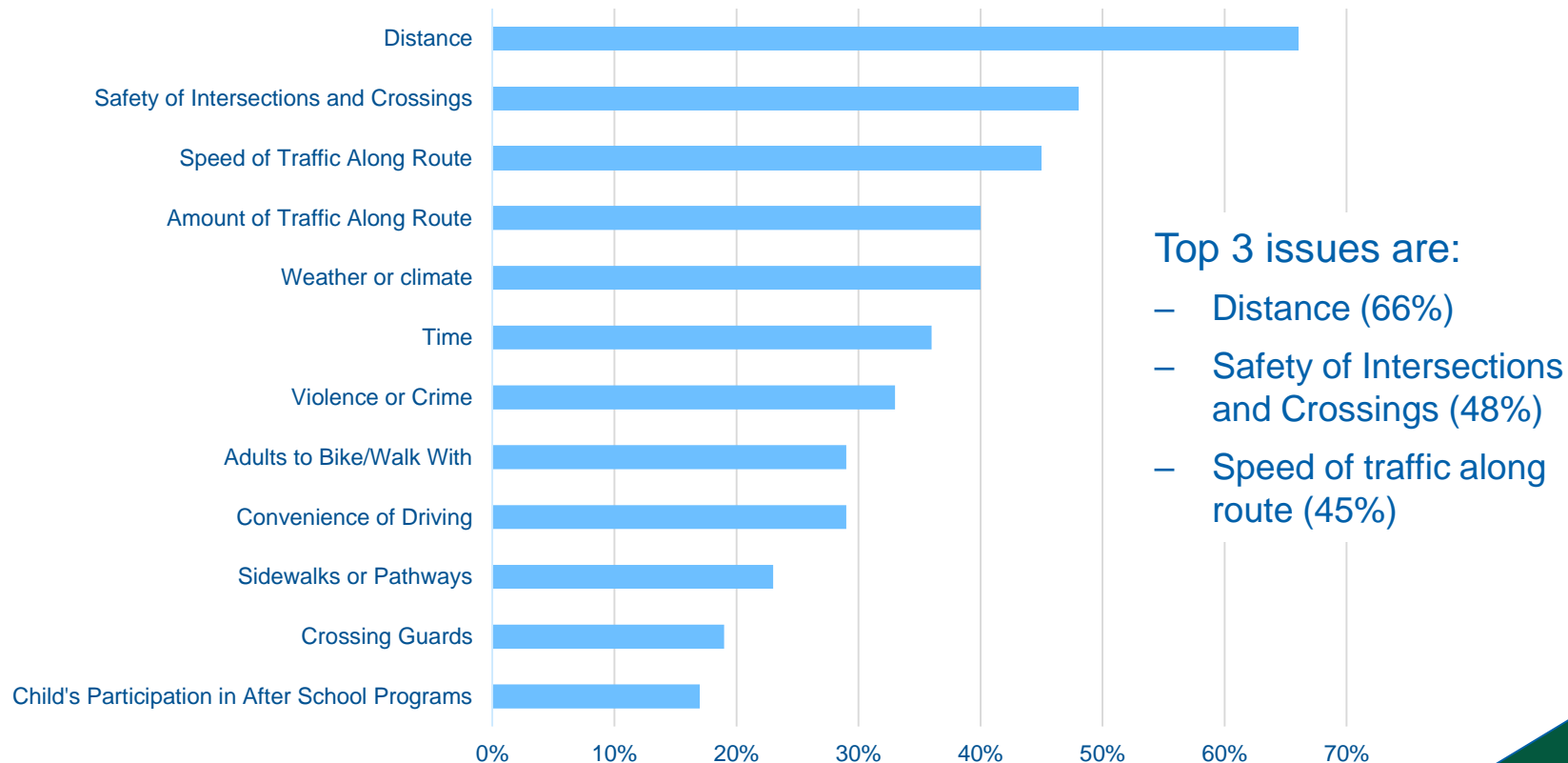
## Morning and Afternoon Travel Mode Comparison



## Fall 2016 Student Travel Tallies

# TRAVEL PATTERNS CONTINUED

Issues reported to affect the decision to not allow a child to walk or bike to/from school by parents of children who do not walk or bike to/from school.



Fall 2014 Parent Survey  
(n= 375)

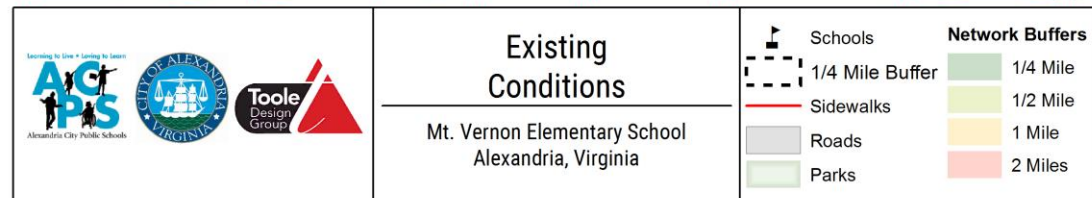
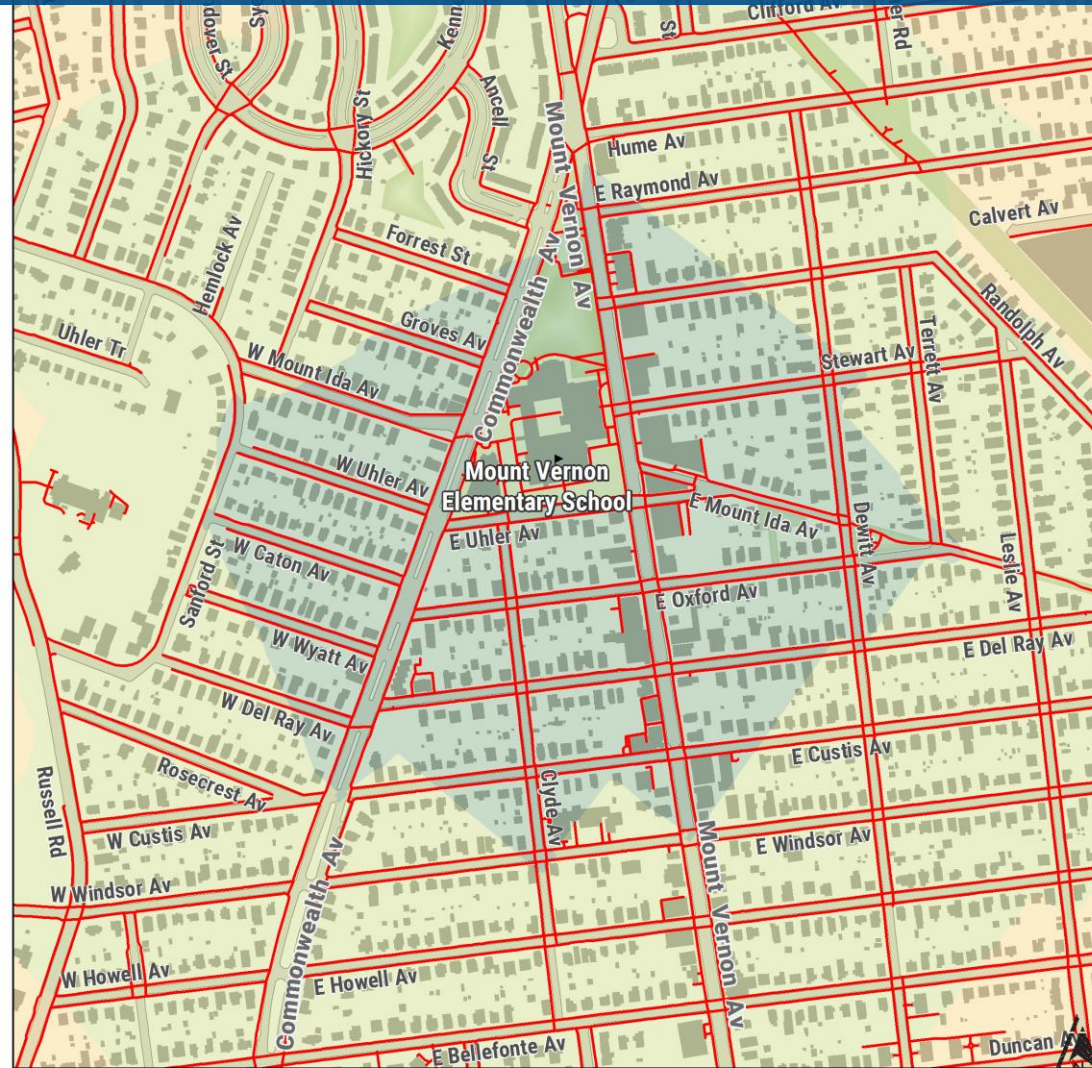


# PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

**Sidewalks** – Most sidewalks are 4' wide with a small landscaped buffer between the roadway.

**Crosswalks** – Crosswalks are present at stop- or signal-controlled intersections along Mt. Vernon Ave and are present across intersecting streets, but there are gaps between stop- and signal-controlled intersections.

**Curb ramps** – Curb ramps are either absent or not ADA-compliant for most intersections.





# BICYCLING NETWORK

## Commonwealth Ave –

Bicycle lanes run along Commonwealth Avenue from W Mason Av to the Four Mile Run Trail.




## Shared Lane Markings–

Many streets including Windsor Ave, Mt. Vernon Ave, and Russell Rd are recommended to receive sharrows according to the Bike/Ped Master Plan.

## Topography –

Hills located west of Commonwealth Ave are a potential barrier to bicycling.



<div><div><div>Learning by One • Leading by Many</div><div></div><div>Alexandria City Public Schools</div></div><div></div><div><div><div>Toole</div><div>Design Group</div></div></div></div>	<div><div>Bicycling Infrastructure</div><div>Mount Vernon Elementary School Alexandria, Virginia</div></div>	<div><div><div>Existing Facilities</div><div><div><div>Trail</div><div>Advisory Bike Lane;</div><div>Bike lane</div><div>Climbing Lane</div><div>Shared Lane Markings</div><div>Unpaved Nature Trail</div></div></div></div><div><div><div>Proposed Facilities</div><div><div><div>Trail</div><div>Shared Roadway</div><div>Enhanced Bicycle Corridor</div></div></div></div></div></div>
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# ARRIVAL OBSERVATIONS

## Arrival

- School starts at 8:00 AM.

## Walkers

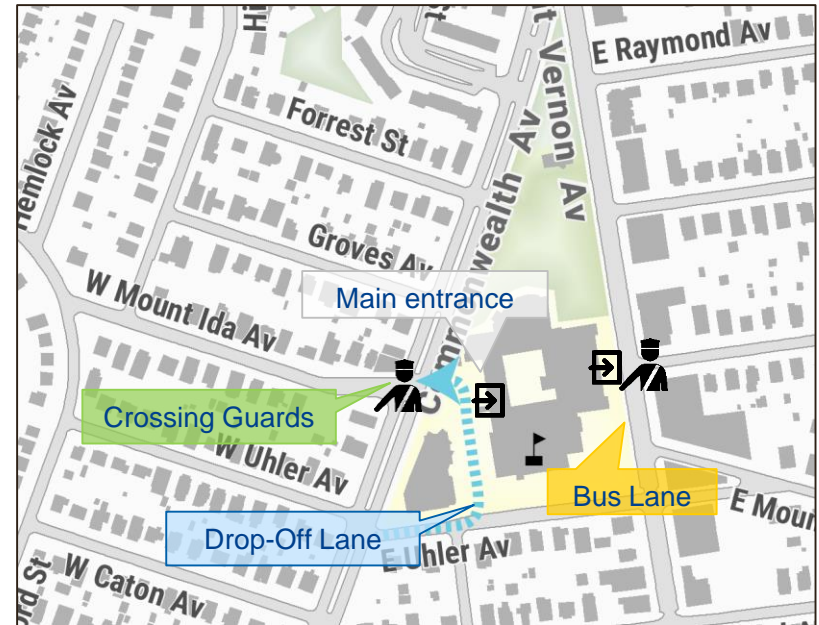
- Walkers enter through the main entrance on the west side of the building adjacent to the drop-off loop.

## Bus Drop-off

- Buses arrive as early as 7:20 AM and drop off students on Mt. Vernon Ave.
- Bus riders enter the school through the entrance on Mt. Vernon Ave.

## Parent Drop-off

- Parents drop off students along the parking lot between the James M. Duncan Branch Library and the school's main entrance.
- Staff assist with unloading vehicles and managing traffic along E Uhler Ave between 7:30-8:00 AM. Many parents drop off students before 7:30 AM.
- The entrance to the school drop-off lane has limited visibility due to the width of the intersection of Clyde Ave and E Uhler Ave.



## Crossing Guards

- There are two crossing guards as shown on the map above.
- The Mt. Vernon crossing guard was previously struck by a car.



# ARRIVAL OBSERVATIONS



**Car Drop-off (Before 7:30 AM)**



**Bus Drop-off on Mt. Vernon Ave**

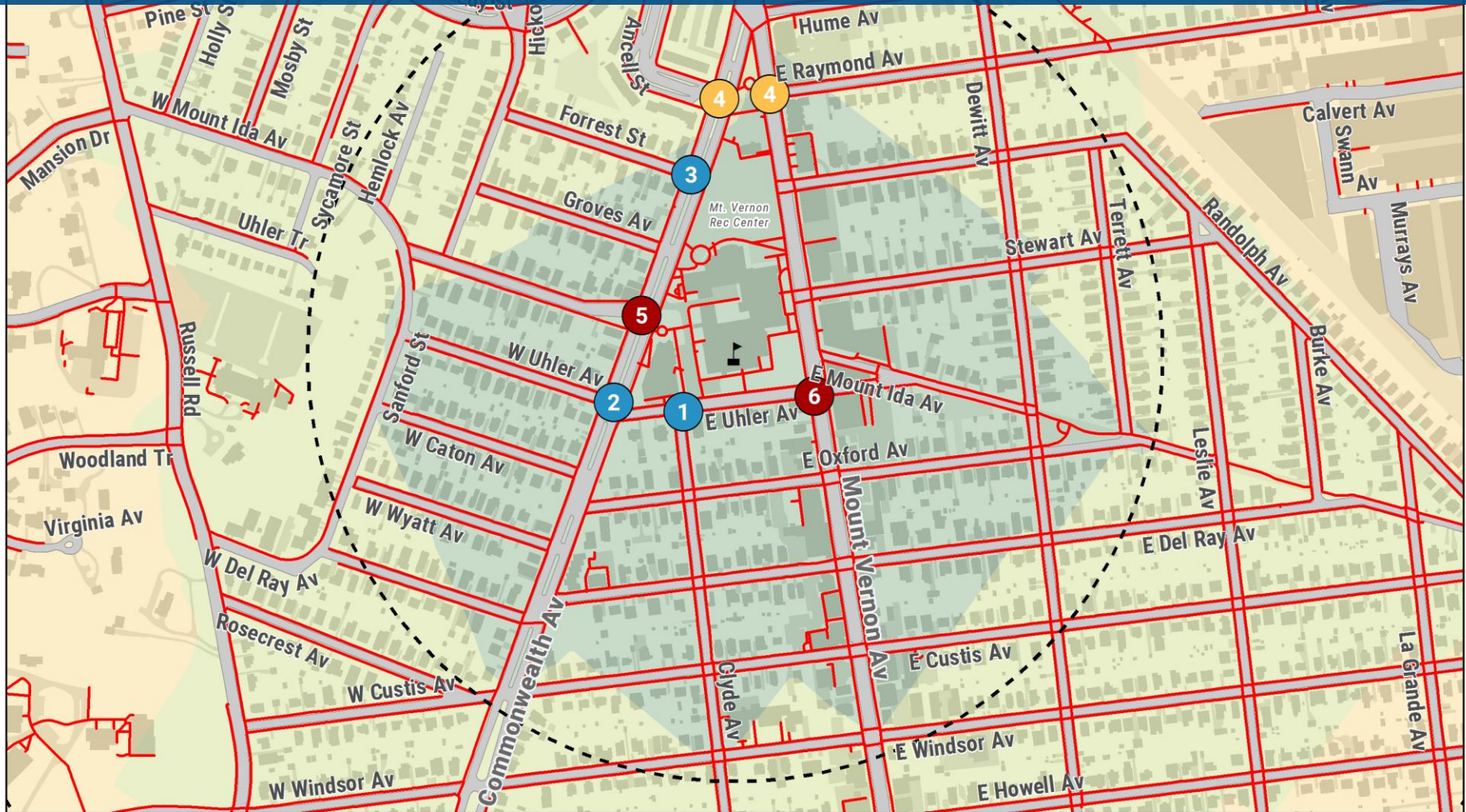


**Car Drop-off (After 7:30 AM)**

# ENGINEERING RECOMMENDATIONS



# INFRASTRUCTURE RECOMMENDATIONS MAP



## Infrastructure Recommendations

Mt. Vernon Elementary School  
 Alexandria, Virginia

- Intersection Recommendations
- Mid-Block Recommendations
- School Zone Signage Recommendations
- Signalized Intersection Recommendations
- Other Recommendations
- Schools

- 1/4 Mile Buffer
- Sidewalks
- Network Buffers**
- 1/4 Mile
- 1/2 Mile
- 1 Mile
- 2 Miles

# GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS WITHIN ½ MILE OF SCHOOL

## Recommendations

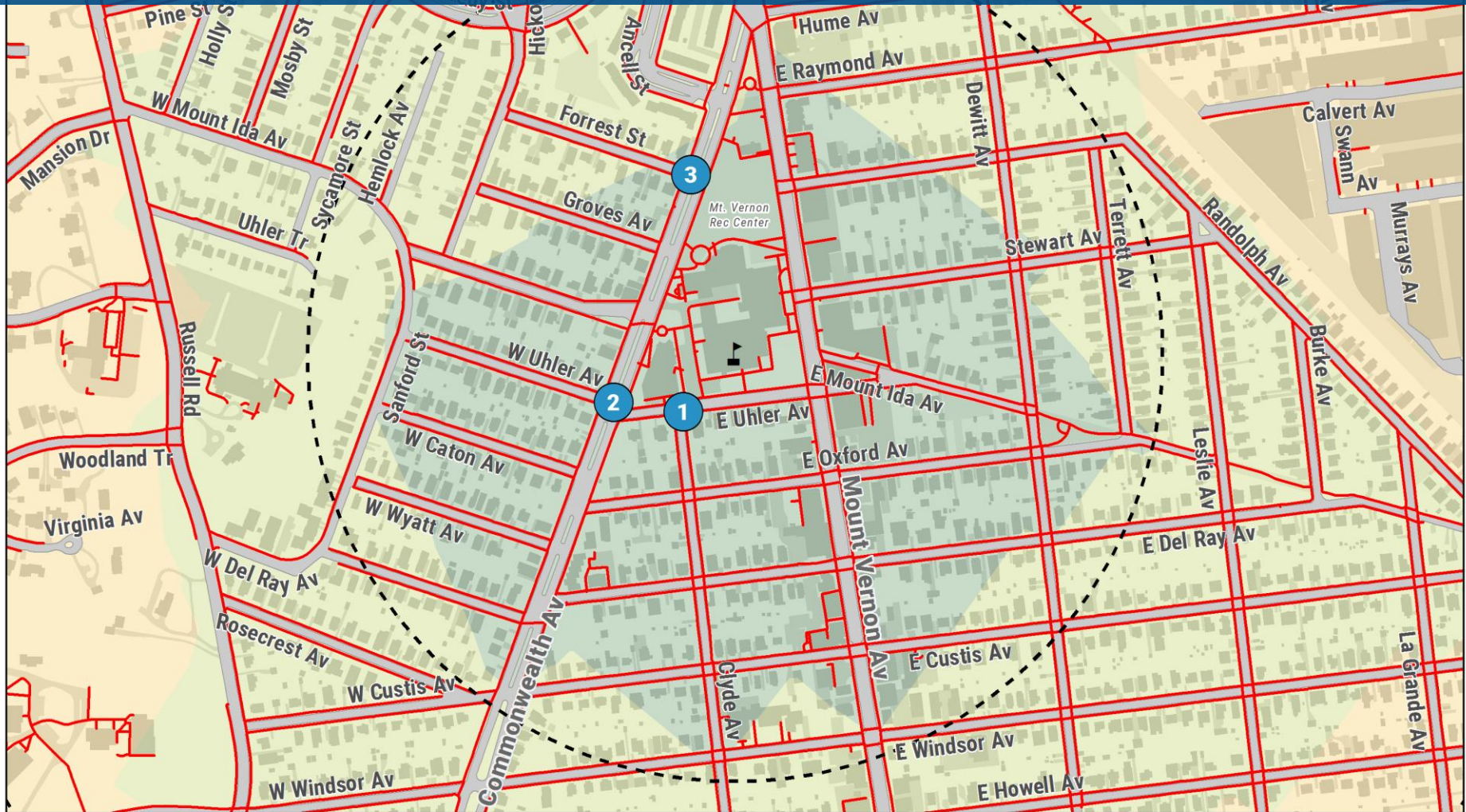
Upgrade curb ramps to meet ADA-compliance

Add marked crosswalks where feasible





# INTERSECTION RECOMMENDATIONS



## Infrastructure Recommendations

Mt. Vernon Elementary School  
 Alexandria, Virginia

- Intersection Recommendations
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# INTERSECTION RECOMMENDATIONS

Map ID	Issue	Recommendation	Timeframe*
1	Sight lines are limited due to the offset nature and length of the intersection. Many drivers are unsure who has the right of way or quickly accelerate to enter the drop-off area	Remove parking on the south side of Uhler Ave between Commonwealth Ave and Clyde Ave during school hours (7:00 AM – 4:00 PM)	Short
	Incoming traffic at the Clyde Ave entrance accelerates quickly to exit queue	Convert high visibility crosswalk to raised crosswalk to slow traffic	Short
2	Lack of marked crosswalks across Commonwealth Avenue between Del Ray Avenue and Mt. Ida Avenue	Install marked crosswalk along with curb bump outs to provide access across Commonwealth Ave	Medium
3	Lack of marked crosswalks across Commonwealth Avenue between Mt. Ida Avenue and Mt. Vernon Avenue	Install marked crosswalk, curb bump outs, and median refuge island to provide access across Commonwealth Ave	Medium

\* Short = within 1 year, Medium = within 3 years, Long = 3 or more years

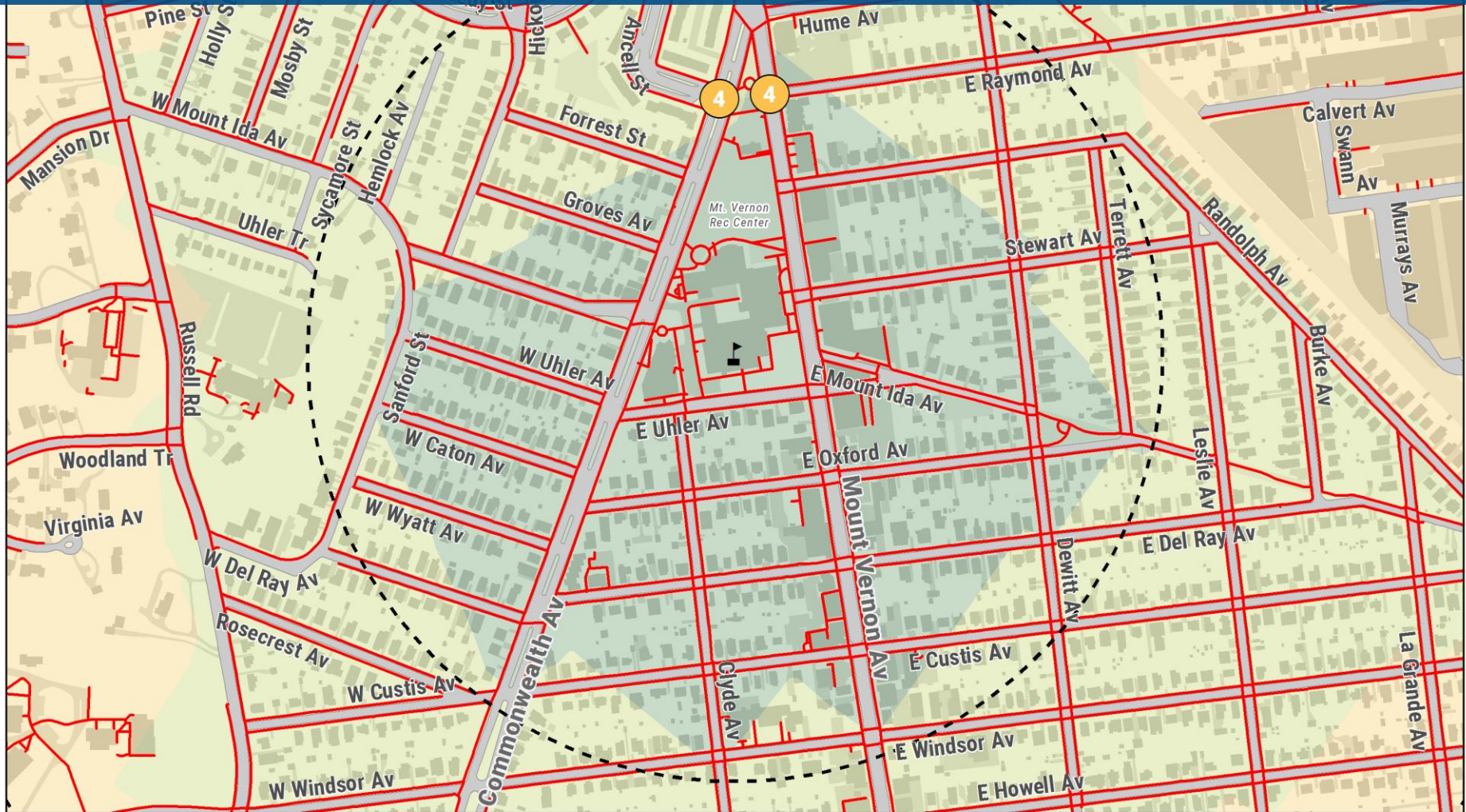


# INTERSECTION RECOMMENDATIONS





# SCHOOL ZONE SIGNAGE



## Infrastructure Recommendations

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 Alexandria, Virginia

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# SCHOOL ZONE SIGNAGE

Map ID	Issue	Recommendation	Timeframe*
4	School zone flashing beacons operate before 7:00 AM	Review and adjust timing of school zone flashing beacons	Short

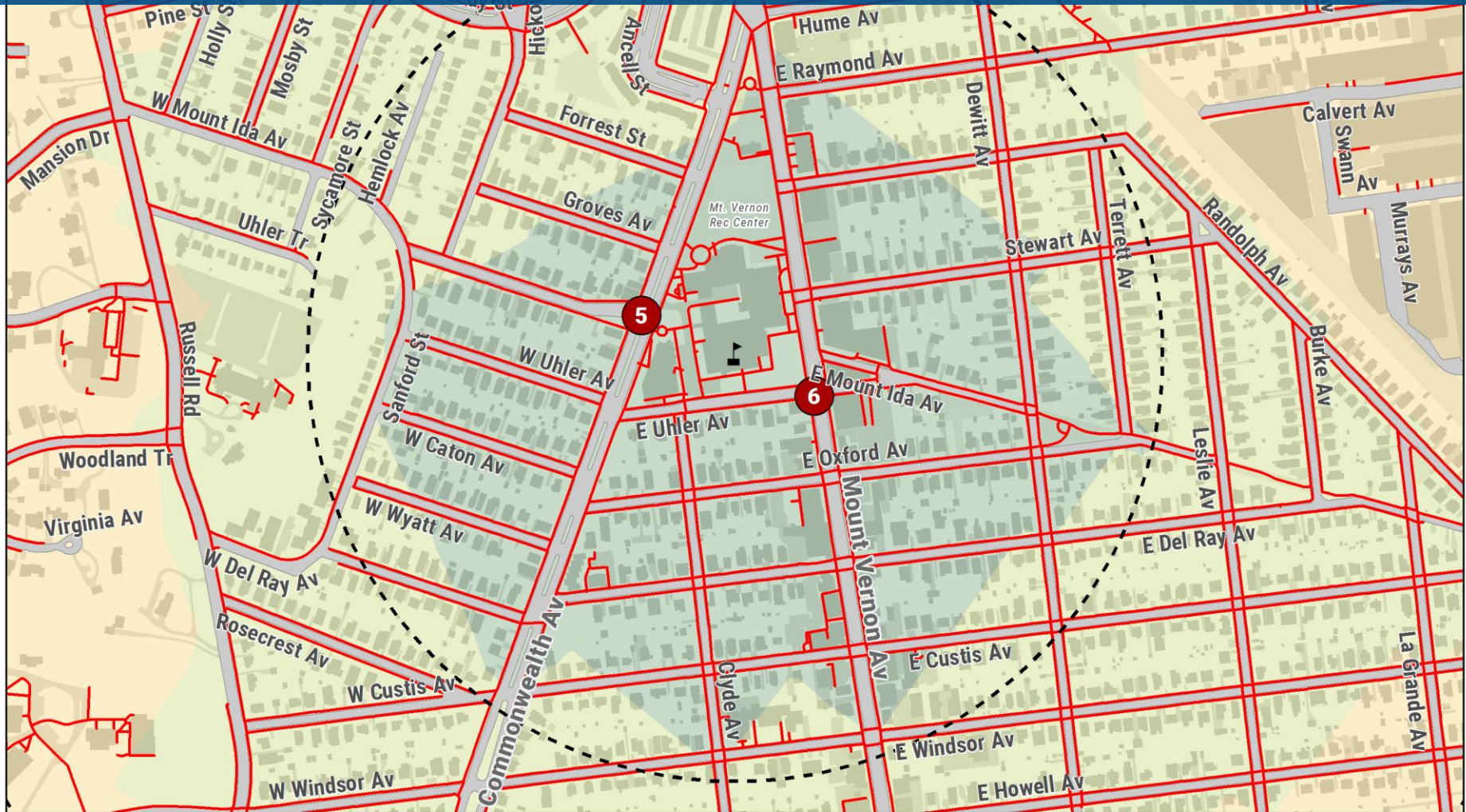
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School zone signage along Mt. Vernon Ave and Commonwealth Ave



# SIGNALIZED INTERSECTIONS



## Infrastructure Recommendations

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 Alexandria, Virginia

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- 1/4 Mile
- 1/2 Mile
- 1 Mile
- 2 Miles



# SIGNALIZED INTERSECTION

Map ID	Issue	Recommendation	Timeframe*
5	Insufficient time for pedestrians to cross Commonwealth Ave	Add pedestrian only phase during school hours to allow for the safe crossing of Commonwealth Ave, and consider adding diagonal crossing	Short
	No pedestrian signal for the Clyde Ave crossing	Add pedestrian signal for the Clyde Ave crossing	Short
	Curb ramps are not properly aligned to crosswalks	Reconstruct curb ramps so that they adequately align with existing crosswalks	Short
6	Pedestrians have difficulty crossing Mt. Vernon Ave within allotted pedestrian time	Lengthen time for pedestrian phase during school hours; consider adding diagonal crossing	Short

\* Short = within 1 year, Medium = within 3 years, Long = 3 or more years

# PROGRAMMATIC RECOMMENDATIONS

# EDUCATION

Recommendation	Continue Existing	Start New
Integrate pedestrian and bicycle safety education into the school curriculum.	●	
Conduct a bicycle rodeo to teach the skills and precautions to ride a bike safely.		●
Incorporate information about walking and bicycling to school in communications with parents.	●	
Provide parents and guardians with safe driving information that stresses the importance of driving safely in school zones and being alert for pedestrians and bicyclists during arrival and dismissal.	●	



# ENCOURAGEMENT

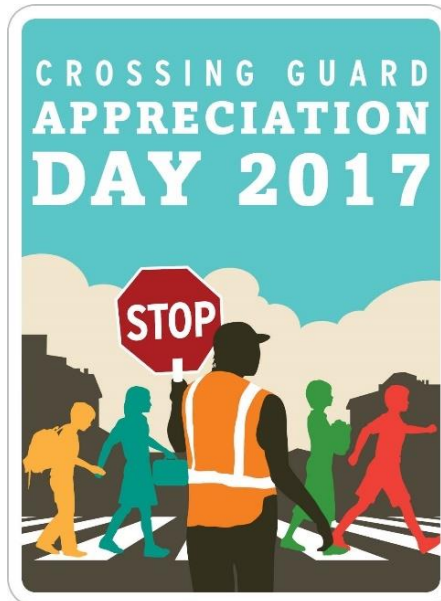
Recommendation	Continue Existing	Start New
Participate in International Walk to School Day and Bike to School Day.		●
Help organize and support walking schools buses.		●
Help organize and support bike trains.		●
Establish a frequent walker / bicyclist program.		●





# ENFORCEMENT

Recommendation	Continue Existing	Start New
Establish a driver pledge program.		●
Celebrate Virginia Crossing Guard Appreciation Day.		●
Work with the police department to provide periodic parking and traffic enforcement near the school.		●



# EVALUATION

Recommendation	Continue Existing	Start New*
Conduct Student Travel Tallies to get baseline data for student travel patterns.	●	
Administer Parent Surveys to collect information on parents' attitudes towards walking and bicycling and reasons why they may or may not allow their children to walk or bike to school.	●	

*\*Travel Tallies were last collected in the fall of 2010 and Parent Surveys were conducted in the fall of 2016 at Mount Vernon Elementary School. Up to date information is required to monitor program success and apply for federal SRTS funding.*

